

Acoma Pueblo
Acoma, New Mexico
Valencia Co.

HABS No. 36-NM-6

HABS
NM
31-ACOMP
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 36
Utah, Colorado and New Mexico

Historic American Buildings Survey
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ADDITIONAL
FOLLOWING

ACOMA PUEBLO
New Mexico.

Acoma pueblo presents evidence that it is the oldest continuously occupied village in the United States and possibly in North America. This evidence is judged by the potsherds found while excavating for the repair of the church, far beneath the present surface. This historic old pueblo is still occupied and is located on top of a sheer rock mesa about 360 feet above the basin below. This mesa is situated in Valencia County, New Mexico, about seventy five miles south and west of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The rock on which Acoma is located is an ideal home site from the standpoint of protection, has water held in natural rock basins and is fairly close to farm lands below. Otherwise the top of the rock is entirely void of vegetation.

The pueblo of Acoma is now composed of three rows of houses combined into nine blocks of many individual houses all facing the south and the great church of San Estevan del Rey. Indian tradition tells us that the pueblo was formerly located on the same rock but farther south and formed a crescent shaped terraced village. We are unfortunate that Coronado or some of his followers did not more clearly describe this famous village for us.

The pueblo was first discovered by Hernando de Alvarado in September 1540, at which time it was supposed to contain about two hundred houses. Acoma was visited by Fray Agosta Rodriguez in 1581, and in 1583 Antonio de Espejo visited it on his way west. Juan de Oñate visited Acoma October 27, 1598 and was soon followed by Juan de Zaldivar in December 1598, at which time Zaldivar was killed. In order to avenge his brother's death, Vicente Zaldivar returned to Acoma in January 1599 to subdue the people and burn the pueblo.

The Acomans proceeded to rebuild and history mentions the pueblo again when Fray Geronimo de Zarate-Salmeron acted as a missionary there in 1617. In the spring of 1629 Fray Juan Ramirez came to Acoma to convert the Indians. It was Ramirez who built the first church, which is claimed by some to be the present one. The Acomans rebelled along with the other pueblos in 1680, at which time Padre Lucas Maldonado was killed.

During all this time just what changes took place architecturally in the village is pure guesswork. We do know that most of the buildings now at Acoma show that they were built since the Spanish occupation and have been influenced by the Spanish. This influence is shown by their use of adobe bricks (a Spanish innovation) instead of stone, also the use of fireplaces instead of their own open fires in the

center of the room. Otherwise the houses are traditionally Indian in their makeup. A few of the oldest houses now standing were built of rock and have been repaired and veneered with adobe; these may possibly date prior to the burning in 1599. Due to the scarcity of building materials on the rock many carved beams and doors, (removed from the church during times of rebellion and unrest) are to be found incorporated in the houses.

In November 1692 Diego de Vargas obtained submission of the Acomans. It was not however a lasting submission and they had to be reconquered July 6, 1699 by Governor Pedro Rodriguez Cubero. In 1713 Padre Carlos Belgado had charge of the parish at Acoma. In 1760 Pedro Ign. Pino was stationed there. In 1782 Acoma was reduced to a visita of Laguna. Since the time of De Vargas the Acomans have been fairly peaceful and the village has undergone but gradual changes. What time will do to the architecture can readily be seen by a comparison of photographs taken in the late 1880's and those taken by the Historic American Buildings Survey.

Very valuable old photographs taken by Charles F. Lummis circa 1890 are deposited with the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles, California. The Laboratory of Anthropology at Santa Fe, New Mexico has the Wittick

collection of photographs taken circa 1883. The State Museum at Santa Fe, New Mexico and the Bureau of Ethnology in Washington have later photographs.

References:

- "Bancrofts Works Vol. XVII Arizona and New Mexico". Hubert H. Bancroft.
- "Leading Facts of New Mexico History"
R. E. Twitchell.
- "Spanish Archives of New Mexico"
R. E. Twitchell.
- " Old Santa Fe Trail", R. E. Twitchell.
B. A. Reuter.

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Received 1936 by H.C. Foreman.

Pueblo of Acoma
Valencia County
New Mexico

Admission

Historic American Buildings Survey

NM-6

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REDUCED DRAWINGS

Addendum to:
PUEBLO OF ACOMA
(Sky City)
Casa Blanca vicinity
Valencia County
New Mexico

HABS No. NM-6

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31-Acomp

1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Addendum to:
PUEBLO OF ACOMA
(Sky City)
Casa Blanca vicinity
Valencia County
New Mexico

HABS No. NM-6

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Data pages 1 through 4 were previously transmitted to the Library of Congress. This is data page 5.

INVENTORY OF PHOTOGRAMMETRIC IMAGES

The glass photogrammetric plates listed below are not reproducible except with special permission. However, reference prints and film copy negatives have been made from the plates indicated by an asterisk (*) and are included in the Library of Congress collection of formal HABS/HAER photographs.

- 4 9.5" x 9.5" glass plate aerial diapositives produced by
Perry E. Borchers of The Ohio State University in 1965

One 9.5" x 9.5" survey control contact print from each
plate; reduced image prints for some plates; survey control
information for each plate.

LC-HABS-GS01-B-1973-501

NORTH BOUNDARY OF MESA
Right photograph of pair with 502
501 and 502 overlap: 60%

LC-HABS-GS01-B-1973-502

NORTH BOUNDARY OF MESA
Left photograph of pair with 501
502 and 501 overlap: 60%

MAJOR STREETS OF THE PUEBLO
Right photograph of pair with 503
502 and 503 overlap: 60%

LC-HABS-GS01-B-1973-503 *

MAJOR STREETS OF THE PUEBLO
Left photograph of pair with 502
503 and 502 overlap: 60%

CHURCH YARD AND SOUTH BOUNDARY OF MESA
Right photograph of pair with 504
503 and 504 overlap: 60%

(Includes one 6" x 6" negative print
and one 6" x 6" positive print)

LC-HABS-GS01-B-1973-504

CHURCHYARD AND SOUTH BOUNDARY OF MESA
Left photograph of pair with 503
504 and 503 overlap:60%

(Includes one 6" x 6" negative print
and one 6" x 6" positive print)

PROJECT INFORMATION STATEMENT

Photogrammetric images were incorporated into the HABS/HAER collections in the summers of 1985 and 1986. Inventories of the images were compiled and filed as data pages for each structure recorded. Since the glass photogrammetric plates are not reproducible except with special permission, a reference print and film copy negative were made from one plate of each stereopair and from the most informative plates in sequential sets. The reference prints and copy negatives were then incorporated into the formal HABS/HAER photograph collections.

The Photogrammetric Images Project was a cooperative endeavor between the HABS/HAER Division of the National Park Service and the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress. The reference prints and film copy negatives of the original plates were made by the Library of Congress Photoduplication Service with funds provided by the Library of Congress Flat Film Preservation Fund. Additional reproductions were made by HABS/HAER. The project was supervised by HABS/HAER Architect John A. Burns, AIA, and completed by HABS Historians Jeanne C. Lawrence (University of London) in 1985 and Caroline R. Alderson (Columbia University) in 1986.

ADDENDUM TO:
PUEBLO OF ACOMA
(Sky City)
Casa Blanca vicinity
Acoma Pueblo
Cibola County
New Mexico

HABS NM-6
HABS NM,31-ACOMP,1-

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
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U.S. Department of the Interior
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